

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 20, 2007

The Honorable Robert Johnson  
Commissioner  
Bureau of Reclamation  
United States Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Commissioner Johnson,

We write in strong support of your April 9, 2007 announcement to allow for a stream flow of 1,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) on the Bighorn River through May 2007. This decision takes into account the needs of all whose economies rely on the Bighorn River and should be maintained.

We are witnessing a tremendous drought in the entire West. As the drought enters the eighth year, all water users are struggling to find enough supply to meet each and every demand. We believe the Bureau of Reclamation's decision to maintain a stream flow of 1,500 cfs represents a reasonable compromise for all of those who depend on the Bighorn River.

As you know, following the construction of the Yellowtail Dam, the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area was established by an Act of Congress on October 15, 1966. Construction of the dam caused the loss of 73 family farms and over 30,000 acres in Wyoming. These losses had a devastating impact on the Big Horn Basin's communities and economies.

In order to offset those tremendous losses, federal officials promised the State of Wyoming a thriving recreation area with the hope of increasing tourism in the Big Horn Basin. Before the construction of Yellowtail Dam, the federal government suggested that more than 2 million visitors would come to the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area each year. Unfortunately, Wyoming's communities are suffering because the increased tourism and growth for the Basin's economies has not materialized as previously suggested.

Drought has become a part of living in the West. All states are affected and all stakeholders should be expected to share in the burden of this struggle. Wyoming's stakeholders should not be expected to suffer at the expense of others. In this drought situation, allowing for a flow of 1,500 cfs is a fair compromise for all involved. This should not be altered.

Thank you for your efforts. We hope you will continue to consider the needs of all stakeholders as you make decisions on this matter. We look forward to a continued dialogue on this important affair.

Sincerely,

*Craig Thomas* *Mike Enzi*  
Craig Thomas      Michael B. Enzi  
United States Senator      United States Senator

*Barbara Cubin*  
Barbara Cubin  
Member of Congress

*Dave Freudenthal*  
Dave Freudenthal  
Governor of Wyoming